Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2544

CONFIDENTIAL YAOUNDE 2544

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PLOS, CM

SUBJECT: LOS: PAUL ENGO AND INTERSESSIONAL WORK

REFS: A) STATE 169615; B) YAOUNDE 2315; C) YAOUNDE 2543

- 1. I PAID FAREWELL CALL ON PAUL ENGO, CAMEROON'S LOS EXPERT, ON JULY 25. ENGO HAD JUST RETURNED FROM KAMPALA WHERE HE ATTENDED MTG OF AFRICAN LOS EXPERTS DURING CURRENT OAU MINISTERIAL MTG.
- 2. ENGO STATED THAT BASIS OF DISCUSSION AT KAMPALA WAS PAPER ON DEEP SEABED ISSUES (CMTE I SINGEL TEXT) THAT HE HAD PREPARED AT CONCLUSION GENEVA CONFERENCE. MANY QUESTIONS WERE ASKED, AND MANY EXPLANATIONS WERE REQUIRED. HE STATED THAT SOMEWHAT TO HIS REGRET (?) THERE SEEMED TO HAVE EMERGED A BROAD AFRICAN SUPPORT FOR HIS PAPER WHICH HAD NOT BEEN HIS INTENTION. PAPER WAS MEANT TO PROVIDE A BASIS FOR DISCUSSION BY LOS PARTICIPANTS, AND IT WOULD BE IMPORTANT TO HAVE HER, NON-

AFRICAN REACTIONS TO IT.

3. ENGO APPEARED HAVE NO NEW IDEAS ON INTERSESSIONAL MTGS. THE INITIAL HOPE THAT SUCH MTG MIGHT TAKE PLACE IN JULY AND AUGUST CAN OBVIOUSLY NOT BE MET. SEPTEMBER WILL BE TAKEN UP WITH UNGA SPECIAL SESSION AND GROUP OF 77 IS TO MEET IN OCTOBER. HE CONTINUES TO FEEL THAT JANUARY WILL PROBABLY BE MOST OPPORTUNE MONEMT FOR SERIOUS DISCUSSION BUT HAS IN MIND THAT SOME PRELIMINARY CONTACTS MIGHT BE MADE IN OCTOBER TO DISCUSS STRATEGY, ETC. BEFORE JANUARY MTG. HE WOULD LIKE CONFIDENTIAL

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TO SEE MAIN MTG TAKE PLACE IN YAOUNDE WHERE PARTICIPANTS

COULD HOLD THEIR DISCUSSIONS IN RELATIVE TRANQUILITY, FREE FROM SOME OF THE PRESSURES WHICH MIGHT BE ENCOUNTERED IN NY OR ELSEWHERE. PARTICIPANTS WOULD NUMBER NOT MORE THAN TWENTY OR THIRTY, SO LOGISTICS SHOULD PRESENT NO GREAT PROBLEM. HE ALSO ACCEPTED POSSIBILITY OF NY, WHERE FACILITIES ADMITTEDLY GOOD, OR SOME OTHER PLACE IN US.

- 4. IN REPLY TO MY QUESTION WHETHER HE HAD BROUGHT PRESIDENT OR FONMIN UP TO DATE ON LOS DEVELOPMENTS SINCE HIS RETURN, ENGO INDICATED HE HAD BRIEFED EX-FONMIN EFON WHO WAS QUITE KNOWLEDGEABLE ON SUBJECT AND THAT HE HAD HAD USEFUL MTG WITH NEW FONMIN KEUTCHA IN KAMPALA. HE ALSO HAD SOME DISCUSSIONS WITH NEW VICE FONMIN NDAM NJOYA WHO, HE FELT, WOULD TAKE A LIVELY AND HELPFUL INTEREST IN SUBJECT. HE HAD NOT MET WITH PRESIDENT, BUT BELIEVED HIM TO BE INFORMED. NOR HAS HE YET SUBMITTED HIS OFFICIAL REPORT TO GURC.
- 5. IN REGARD QUESTIONS RAISED REF A RE EFFECT OF CABINET SHUFFLE ON ENGO'S ROLE IN LOS NEGOTIATIONS, EMB SEES NO RPT NO PREDICTABLE EFFECT, WHILE RECOGNIZING, OF COURSE, THAT NEW MINISTER COULD WANT SOMEONE ELSE IN THEORETICALLY HIGH RANKING TECHNICAL ADVISOR POSITION ENGO NOW OCCUPIES. AS CAMEROON'S SOLE LOS EXPERT AND PASSIONATE DEVOTEE, ENGO LIKELY REMAIN KEY MAN IN THE FIELD, EVEN IF HIS TITLE OR POSITION SHIFTED, AS LONG AS HE REMAINS IN YAOUNDE. WHILE GURC MIGHT BE RELUCTANT TO FINANCE ANY COSTLY CONFERENCE IN YAOUNDE, THERE WOULD BE ATTRACTION OF THE PRESTIGE ASSOCIATED WITH PRRECTING CAMEROON'S IMAGE AS MTG PLACE. BARRING THE UNFORESEEABLE, WE WOULD EXPECT GURC, AT MINIMUM, TO PERMIT ENGO'S CONTINUED INVOLVEMENT IN LOS NEGOTIATIONS AND SUPPORT REASONABLE TRAVEL COSTS ENTAILED THEREIN.

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